

NSST Meeting
Cabela's
Owatonna, Minnesota

29-30 January 2003

Attendees:

Seth Mott	Ron Reynolds	Mark Koneff
Barry Wilson	Guy Zenner	Julio Carrera
Randy Wilson	Dale Caswell	Al Hanson
Andy Bishop	Carol Lively	Carey Smith
Barb Pardo	Tice Supplee	Andre Breault
Brian Sullivan	Jim Dubovsky	Mike Johnson
Mike Anderson	Bob Trost	
Tim Bowman	Eric Reed	

In lieu of a detailed agenda, Seth Mott presented a list of agenda topics to be covered in the course of the meeting, these included:

An overview of events since release of first update
Results of recent meeting of the Update Steering Committee and NAWMP Committee
Overview of the creation of a Mexican Waterfowl Plan
Prioritization issues
Population objectives
Future of the NSST

Over view of consultation process and comments received. Following release of the first draft in August, few questions or comments came in during the IAFWA meeting in September. Toward the end of the comment period things changed and dozens, but not hundreds of comments were received. Most comment letters went into great detail and great passion about various aspects of the first draft. Upon reading the comments, Seth began to get scared as some comments were quite conflicting and prioritization and other issues seemed very contentious. It seemed at first to be a difficult task to address all the comments and make improvements that were acceptable to the waterfowl management community. At a December meeting with the four flyway reps and other MBMO staff – Rex, Seth and Mark learned that many of the issues that seemed quite contentious originally were really an issue of mis-communication – the first draft did not do a good job of communicating their thoughts and ideas on the issues. This helped lay the path for resolution of these issues.

Steering Committee/Plan Committee. The Steering Committee met in early January to define the overall U.S. and Canadian issues to be addressed in the second draft, and which of these needed the attention of the full Plan Committee. The Steering Committee took 7 main issues to the Plan committee

1. There was some level of confusion over the audience for the plan document – readers either didn't know which audience was intended, or they had the

wrong audience. The Plan Committee decided they would like to see two separate documents – 1 relatively short one to target government administrators, funders, and maybe JV Boards, – this would be a marketing or strategic document similar to the 1986 Plan. There will also be a longer operational version of the plan with more detail – tables and appendices, that is targeted at the JV technical committees and implementation groups. There will be some things common to both documents. The next draft will have both documents. They would both have a similar look and both would be called the NAWMP Plan. Both needed together to be the NAWMP

2. Vision Statement – This was a problem for many people. Plan Committee is still having trouble with it. It did not address any type of abundance level for waterfowl. There seems to be confusion between a vision and mission statement. The Steering Committee will continue to work on this.
3. Confusion and concern about prioritization and its uses at regional and BCR scales. Options and alternatives have been developed and will be discussed and resolved by the NSST. Results will be quickly distributed to the Flyways for discussion at their winter meetings, and then Flyway comments on the changes will be considered in the second draft.
4. Changing role for the Plan Committee – The first draft outlined a more active role in programmatic assessment of JV's, information fora, and recommendations to other bodies, like NAWCA. People were skeptical on whether they could or would do this. The Plan Committee continues to work on this through development of annual work plans
5. The first draft did not adequately define the resource and policy needs needed to accomplish the Plan. The second draft will mention the need for continued growth of non-federal matching funds, state money, need for increased monitoring and research, increased wetland funding, importance of Farm Bill Clean Water, and opportunities for sharing resources with other non-wildlife policies and/or programs.
6. Issue of taxonomic delineations of the populations and the population table – at what level should species and subspecies be delineated. TBD by NSST
7. Production schedule – need to extend comment period for second draft. Need to take the output from this meeting and get it out quickly for the flyway tech meetings in February and March. Feedback back to the steering committee in time to create a second draft in late March and April. Second draft to Plan Committee committee in early May with second draft release on June 1. Approval by September. Then ministerial review and signature.

Mike Anderson – having looked at all the comments. First round was very useful - we got a lot of good comments. Also, had conflicting advice. Nearly unanimous support for the focus on the biological foundation – and the basic thrust of basic biological planning.

Two major issues that were raised: Prioritization (to be addressed here). Future of the Plan Committee – form and function. Much of the work envisioned for the Plan Committee is really work for the NSST.

There seems to be fairly broad recognition or desire for this group to become more involved, engaged and active in the NAWMP implementation. The concept of an international technical support team for the flyways seems to be a good idea. How can we really do this – the time, the resources and the process?? We really haven't delivered “the Groceries” yet – in terms of technical issues. We have heard this loud and clear.

Mexican Waterfowl Plan - Julio Carrera

The new Federal administration created a National Advisory Subcommittee for the Conservation, Management and Rational Use of Waterfowl and their Habitats in Mexico to advise the Director General of SEMARNAT (federal wildlife agency). The goal of the sub-committee is to develop a National Program for Waterfowl Conservation. A draft plan has been presented to the Mexican government and approved. It is the intent of sub-committee and SEMARNAT to seek the guidance and assistance of their counterparts in Canada and the U.S. in developing and implementing waterfowl surveys, waterfowl regulations, law enforcement, non-toxic shot and hunter education programs. The subcommittee is composed of federal, state, university and NGO waterfowl biologists, also known as Mexican Union for the Ducks (MUD)

Break –

Prioritization –

Flyways and Council will get another shot at what comes out of this meeting during the March meeting – and prior to finalization

How should/could (BCR, Species) prioritization be used – we need to better describe use and limitations. The first draft did not do a good job explaining how regional BCR information could be used and issues about how to step down at more local scales.

Proposed changes:

- use original 1986 map to delineate important waterfowl areas across North America
- Use revised maps based on waterfowl distributions from new Bellrose
- use appropriate data sets, Mid-Winter instead of CBC
- add migration / staging areas map
- separate listing processes in either of the three countries might affect the prioritization process by elevating a species to high priority

What to do about characterizing overall geographic priorities? How do we deal with breeding duck priorities in the PPR – to keep this in the forefront. Is the PPR still the highest priority? The language in 1986 was specific to mallards and pintails. This would be retained, but also point out that we have learned more and have other important issues – sea ducks, scaup. Dick Bishop has pointed out that the NAWMP cannot be successful if the prairies fail.

They plan to use the original map and explain how this original view has been expanded to where we are today.

Rex – we have been engaged in this prioritization process for 2 years now. We have never really had a productive discussion of what the prioritization is, why we are doing it and who it is for? This needs to be done. Need to start getting the full horsepower out of this group. No one seems to be happy with the process and the results. If we are going to deliver habitat programs – there has to be some prioritization. What guidance do we want to provide to local groups, JVs etc, about the importance of their areas and what do we need to say in the text about the need for, value and limitations of prioritizations.

Trost – it has been a long hard road

One thing that handicaps our efforts is that we do not have a full time staff. This needs to be changed. DMBM and PF are both strongly supportive of strengthening the biological foundation of the plan. We get into problems when we are dealing with the multiplicities of scale. Who finally gets the money is the driving issue surrounding the problems with prioritization. Like it or not – endangered species issues will rank high. Also, the importance of hunting of a particular species should rank high, but cannot ignore other species.

A ranking by BCRs is not intuitive to most waterfowl biologists. Other bird plans use BCR to some degree, more or less. PIF support this type of planning but they do not have the knowledge, experience or data to deal with this, like the waterfowl people.

Waterfowl people – ask – why do we have to do business at someone else's scale when we have better data and information for another scale.

Rex – there is an attempt to develop a common prioritization system for all birds – we have vigorously resisted that. These people will not go away until we develop a solid prioritization plan. There are other people that want to step us and do this for us – based mostly on subjective information.

There was a frustration that we had lost the original 34 priority areas. It was suggested that we needed to produce the original map with new areas overlayed on it.

Frank Bellrose has gone to lots of work to update his maps – they all ID'd breeding migration and wintering habitat and migration corridors. They are all in the same format – they could be overlayed in a GIS and scored to develop NA priority areas. This would be based in science and would effectively deal with the issues of have different data for different species in different areas.

What is Frank doing – what other information is Bellrose using? Federal refuges, state areas – regular breeding and wintering surveys. All of these maps have been circulated to waterfowl people. It is not useful to use the entire Arctic BCR to designate areas important to geese – we know the important areas for geese.

Problem of one priority size fits all.....Historically we have not dealt with species or populations that do not cross at least one international boundary.

An all inclusive plan for NA waterfowl – needs to address resident vs. share birds separately – different levels of priorities from an international perspective. Plan Committee decided to acknowledge all species of NA waterfowl – but footnote in the plan about resident species – conservation of a particular species lies with the political entities within the range of that species.

If we go to a BCR scale – we need to be careful not to describe these areas as populations. Just because we have priorities at this level does not mean that we intend to manage at this level. We have refuge managers think that we should manage harvest to differentially regulate harvest to affect the numbers of birds on their refuge.

The text needs to be clear about what level we do manage populations.

Ron Reynolds - We must go to a finer scale than BCRs – it is not appropriate to have the entire arctic represented by one BCR; or western US and this steps down even to the smallest BCR. In some ways the Plan committee has put too many constraints on the NSST. The price tag to protect wetlands and grasslands in ND and SD would require \$2 billion just to keep us where we are today. This would eat up all the NAWCA funds for the next 50 years at today's dollar value. He likes a Bellrose approach. We could have a map for every species. More explicit guidance than is currently proposed.

Eric Reed– what exactly are we basing out priorities on? Population trends? This is a very dynamic process...they are going to be outdated as we write them. Importance of a species or population in the harvest – both sport and subsistence. Even though the total subsistence harvest may be low – it remains very important socially and economically relative to sport harvest. Harlequin ducks – eastern vs. western. He likes the idea of the Bellrose maps – use this information as the basis for setting priorities.

Anderson – Scale issue – at what scale is it appropriate for the NSST and the Plan committee to provide prioritization? Key marshes in the west? Thunderstorm maps in the PPR? Is this an appropriate level for the NSST? It is really the job of the JV or local entities.

Seth Mott – the first draft comments seem to say that they want to see the priorities at a finer scale.

Bob Trost – we are hearing that people don't like the BCR lines and that we can do a better job of priorities.

Rex – nothing we do at a national approach should prevent a JV from coming in with biologically based information on the importance of a local area.

Seth Mott – what scale, what data set, what criteria? These seem to be major issues in the comments received.

Things fell apart in Lafayette when the Plan committee said that it did not want rankings for geographical priorities.

No spatial scale is going to be perfect for all areas and species. If we get too fine the document will be proportionately larger.

Is it useful to have a group like this provide guidance for priorities? You will get a wide variety of answers to this – depends on what you are talking about species or geography.

Carey Smith - Opportunity is what drives JVs. All JVs except one are all bird joint ventures. One JV has only 2 waterfowl people on their board.

The other bird plans do not provide continental prioritization.

What is the Cadillac of a planning document for the NAWMP – it would be a thunderstorm map for North America. We could get there in five years if every JV were engaged.

Would it be helpful in the plan to have an example of the Cadillac? Yes, this has been suggested in the comments. Do it by example with the statement that this is the goal of the NSST – to get this done everywhere.

We could also show another example from another JV – if better data exists – this needs to be brought forward.

Generally we decided that prioritization is desirable – now what are the specifics?

Rex – continental prioritizations are based on the data bases.

Population trend

Used the entire period of data. Wouldn't it be more useful to just use the most recent years. Tried this – but ended up using the long-term trends in every case – they were current in every case except for redheads where there was a slight difference between the short and long-term trends.

Short-term trends would not correlate very well with their relationship to their numbers relative to the NAWMP goals.

Who should define the trends for goose populations? Flyways? AGJV?

In the matrix – trend and population objective are combined to give a priority rank for each goose and swan population.

Problem in that Unknown/Unknown always fall into the high priority category.

May need a priority for conservation and a priority for information.

Unknown/unknown could result in an unknown priority and then the priority ranking would be based on expert opinion.

Rex, Mark, or Seth are going to each of the Flyway meetings. These population objectives, trends and priorities need to be addressed by the Flyways.

Lunch

Cansvasback moved up one level of importance because of their social importance in the harvest.

Gadwall harvest has been increasing – now exceed GWT in recent years – maybe some of these other species should be included in the high priority. Maybe the top 3 in the bag should be included in the high priority. Discussed a 5% level of harvest to be included.

Consider a one paragraph narrative about gadwall – that would serve to highlight the need to update the priority information on a regular basis. Ron Reynolds will write this paragraph.

Just because a species is listed as an endangered species does not mean it is a priority for the plan.

Interior Trumpeter Swan – High because of small population size and active reintroduction effort. Suggest that it should be moderate on a continental basis.

What period was used for trends for goose populations?

The following pops would all be mod-low instead of overpopulation concern

WA Snow

Mid-Cont WF

Pacific WF

Western Tundra Swan

Why BCR's looking for an ecologically based unit – small enough to be useful, small enough to have data collections meaningful. Some (Mexico) are too small. Some are too large. We have changed enough of them that they are no longer BCRs. Probably be best if we stayed with something like BCRs and called them waterfowl management units.

Need to restore our focus area concept and update them. If you use the focus areas – you cannot have priorities outside of the focus areas.

Used May survey wherever it existed – attributed it to BCRs

In US used BBS data where no other survey data exist
US data is based on mid-winter survey and also in Mexico.

Bellrose is the only system that has a common currency for every species in the plan.
It is a reference to a published authority
It does a better job of identifying specific focus areas.

Seth – we need to provide more detailed guidance on something less than a continental scale.

BCR scale does not include the level of detail that represents what we know about specific waterfowl areas

Rankings should help to redirect funding to appropriate locations – no funding for mallards off coast of Kodiak Island. As well as to assist JVs and new BCR initiatives in figuring out priority waterfowl species.

R. Wilson questioned the utility of species priorities at the BCR scale. Likewise, many JVs stated that these were of little benefit to them, although a couple argued the other way. Regardless, it was decided to move forward with the process, under the assumption that these priorities will be used to better direct NAWCA dollars and to assist JVs in determining their priority species.

Maps

If we use Bellrose – how do we update it in the future?

We would need to provide some narrative about the process we used to incorporate the Bellrose maps – it would be in the book. Bellrose is a mix of good data and expert opinion.

How do we generate species priorities within BCR's

What you would get if you used Bellrose would be something fairly close to the original focus area map, but would be more complete and all encompassing. You would get a much better identification of important waterfowl area.

Break –

Seth - where are we? Most people seem to be saying that we have information on the relative priorities for waterfowl that we want to present in the NAWMP. We'd like to present in some BCR format as long as it does not dilute our knowledge. That could be maps of important waterfowl areas as we know them, or maps of our prioritization data base using different cut points. We could prepare products from the Bellrose update – to improve and present our information and have a more credible reference on where the

information is derived. We don't yet have agreement on the best way to do this. For providing planning guidance across NA, for providing information on a regional scale using the best information we have. How do we provide this graphically for ducks and geese on a continental scale?

Someone in this room is familiar with the NAWCA scoring process. We need to make sure our best science is not compromised by how someone (NAWCA) chooses to use it for scoring purposes.

Based on our understanding of the available information we cannot get a Bellrose approach done in time for the next review.

Rex – is there an interest in updating the prioritizations on a regular basis – say 2 years from now? Say – work to incorporate a Bellrose approach. Bellrose would be an intermediate step to getting to the Cadillac approach for each JV.

Seth – take the BCR lines off the geographic priority map. Just show the important waterfowl areas from 1986, updated with current knowledge. Then have the species prioritizations in the table of BCR by BCR listing of species lists. Meeting attendees provided Rex with suggested changes to the important waterfowl areas, he compiled them overnight.

Someone needs to go to Bellrose to get permission to use the data and maps in the future.

Break for day.

Thursday

Review of new map of priority areas

Need to get back to Rex with names of polygons for the map.

Need a definition of “Continental Significance” “Areas of concern”

Seth tried to call Dave Sharp to see what criteria were used in 1986, will follow-up.

One proposal = An area of continental significance is one that would sustain a significant or a majority of a particular species or population during the annual cycle.

A defined or restricted area..... For high priority species (?)

Discussion issues

San Luis Valley

Northern MN RND areas

Florida RND areas

Northern Great Plains

What about the Rio Grande Valley?

If it is the 1986 plan it should be left in unless we have new or better information.

What is the difference between a continental and a regional significance?

A working definition of areas of continental significance to waterfowl:

Major ecological region of the greatest significance to continental waterfowl, or

A restricted area that sustains a majority (>50%) proportion of a managed population (as defined in tables 2, 3 and 4 of the population section of the revised NAWMP) of a species; or

A restricted area with a cumulative benefit to smaller proportions of the populations of multiple species,

The degradation of which would have a significant adverse continental impacts to North American waterfowl

Break

How do we handle T&E species and species of special concern in Canada. These will be handled in the table with a / followed by a note.

Geese – take out “overpopulation concern” and replace with “above objective”

BCR species list could be maintained on web page or in the “big” document – the group seems to be split on where the best place to put this stuff. – the steering committee will address this issue.

Review of duck BCR tables - dealing with glaring errors, however, many ranks were changed based on opinions of those present.

Review goose and swan BCR table

Need to review the text – provide comments on how to make the text better.

Population objectives – Mark Koneff

Issue – taxonomic resolution – sensitivities to legal and/or mitigation issues.

Criteria = allelopatric or genetically distinct subspecies

Little discussion on this issue – most are comfortable with what Mark has done. However, M. Johnson questioned the need to show all the different races of eiders.

Potential problems with stock identification and legal actions and ramifications. Plan Committee agreed to defer to FWS and CWS on final definitions of species, populations, races or stocks for management purposes.

Discussion of the breakdown of Common Eider races. Decided to leave it in – desired by CWS, Sea Duck JV

Waterfowl Taxonomy questions. Should the Update include a table of scientific nomenclature? Which references?

Issue – long-term trend data – do we use numbers generated from abundance surveys or lack of surveys (e.g., unknown trends) or do we “fudge” the data to reflect expert opinion and/or data from the literature. Most agree to incorporate other sources of information in setting long-term trends.

Scalable objectives – meaning has been being misinterpreted. Mark took out references to this, because it was unclear – There will be ongoing effort to try to develop performance indicators or measurements that relate waterfowl population levels to environmental variability in habitat at landscape scales.

Break

Mark – Vicksburg meeting results – August 2002 – subgroup of NSST – JV evaluation coordinators –discussed issues of biological planning in non-breeding areas. Cross-seasonal effects – no real way to evaluate the success of programs delivering bio-energetics for waterfowl. Agreed to meet again in December with a subset of the non-breeding evaluation coordinators. Results of the second meeting – got bogged down. They had hoped, as a goal, to at least set some real basis competing models. They left with some good ideas and concepts for future work, but did not achieve what they had hoped.

Future of the NSST Discussion – Seth - what is the purpose and function of the NSST in the longer term? What do we do and how do we routinely go about doing it? NSST was formed as a continental technical body that advises the Plan Committee as well as provides links to other technical groups and working on waterfowl conservation. For example, what specific guidance can we provide the Inter-Mountain West JV on how to improve their biological foundation and planning. How do we operate in the next few years? How do we organize? Do we need more resources?

Ron Reynolds– would caution against leading people to believe that we can detect at a continental level – population changes that we can tie back to NAWMP accomplishments. In the PPR we have a good handle on our population but cannot show any changes due to our accomplishments with the NAWMP – with the exception of CRP – which we had nothing to do with. CRP cost about \$170 million per year in ND (and SD?) – thus hard to develop measure of benefits of \$1 million in expenditures from

NAWCA. Farm Bill – this group could have a very important role in the Farm Bill. The NAWMP does not seem to be well represented in Farm Bill activities. We should be able to have some type of impact on Farm Bill issues through the Plan Committee or someone else.

Detecting continental population changes are probably only going to be possible with landscape level habitat changes.

Mike Anderson – one thing that has been talked about is thinking about an event in which most of the key players get together and think about the meaning of the recent update and having a series of presentation that deal with the thrust of the current update, updates on progress and evaluations – develop a working dialog among the JVs and other and put ideas together on how to assure progress in the next period. This might be a good way to get our minds together on how to move forward. The NSST would have to get together to think about all of the before the “Big Bash”.

Once the update is completed, what is the role of the NSST to help or assure that the NAWMP moves forward. In the PPJV – we don’t need guidance on what needs to be done – we need money to do the work that we know needs to be done. We have research needs that need to be done – they have been published in the Wildlife Society Bulletin.

Rex – Thinks we are mixing scales here? This group should not be working on regional Farm Bill issues. Need to be thinking on a Continental Scale. How do we assure that we are asking the right kind of questions.

Should we be asking the Association of Joint Ventures to lobby for funding for operational support for the NSST? They have been very successful in securing additional funding for JVs.

The original NSST had a price tag associated with it....Mike Anderson will send it out to the few of us that haven’t seen it.

Have heard quite a bit from the Plan Committee on what they want from the NSST. Have not really heard much from the Flyway Councils and the JVs on what they want from the NSST. Need to work to get this type of input.

The NSST needs to be the keeper of the data, maps and information that goes into the Plan and to keep it current and updated.

Rex – the Plan committee should make a recommendation that the NAWCA proposals be evaluated on the strength of the science in the proposals.

Ron Reynolds – jealous that the PHJV get to use NAWCA money for evaluation. Do we want to get a cut of the NAWCA money that goes to every JV for evaluation and monitoring.

Carol Lively – all the bird groups at the WMI meeting last week said that funding for monitoring and research was the number one priority, followed by money for habitat, followed by money for JVs. Is this correct?(Actually, I don't think everyone at the WMI meeting would agree to that order, but all three were "top" priorities/ Seth Mott) Most management boards don't know who the Plan Committee is and what they do. Same for the NSST.

Carol – it was the sense of the group that we had better do the best we can to maintain what we have – in terms of funding. Things are poised to be cut – probably due to homeland security and pending war in Iraq. Neotropical migrants, NAWCA, etc. 1234 money comes specifically to JVs - \$10 million in 2004.

Why haven't we been more successful in getting money for evaluation and research. We have never made a strong case for the need for evaluation and monitoring – and we have never been in a stronger position to do so than with the current update and the efforts to improve the biological foundations of the plan. We need to take maximum advantage of this position over the next year. The Plan committee and the Joint Ventures have drifted apart to a large degree – this is the same for the Plan Committee and the Flyway Councils. We cannot afford to drop this issue.

Seth – will put together some type of email to NSST members – issues – soliciting every JV about their expectations for the NSST – link to the update. We seem to have a consensus on a Plan Committee forum in a year or so – to develop greater ownership in Plan and issues. Also, nature of the job, resources required. Need to get better organized to better provide the linkages across the JVs????

The vitality of this group depends on how engaged everyone is involved. There are different challenges in the US, Canada and Mexico.

If we got to the point where money became available, then the NSST would have a role in how the money would be distributed for evaluation and monitoring. Any JV should be able to withstand an evaluation of how they deliver habitat programs support those programs with evaluation and monitoring.

Waterfowl has not been very successful in getting money for research in recent times compared to non-waterfowl. Need to have dedicated sources of money for the long-term – not just a pile of money that everyone fight over each year. Need stability in funding for evaluation and monitoring.

Eric, Julio and Seth to develop a short recommendation to identify short-term means for this technical group to work towards what we are talking about. More dedicated staff at the federal level, some funding or the tasks we will be charged with. Need to re examine the commitment from the three federal agencies. Need to try to make some changes or no one will want to participate in the NSST. Mike Anderson will draft a one pager that describes the purpose or rationale for the "summit meeting".

They will reiterate the original NSST charges, the charges for the update and the need for some type of support to do this work.

– **Pintail Action Plan** – Mike Anderson - This document was distributed by Carla Guyn in November. Following a Pintail workshop held in CA, a prospectus for a Pintail Action group has been developed and distributed to try to keep pintails in the forefront. The idea of a pintail JV was rejected at the meeting. This was followed by a meeting in Alberta last summer – and later a meeting in Bismarck – as a new and novel way of directing attention to pintail without establishing a new JV. The prospectus was sent to people involved in pintails and to JV that are involved with pintails. They might function as a satellite body of the NSST – at least some link to the NSST. Plan, advocate and coordinate pintail research and management among the joint ventures. Is this a good idea? How would it work? The Flyways need to review this in concept. This needs to be brought to the Central Flyway in March – Caswell has arranged for time on the agendas at the MF, CF and PF in March.

How will this initiative get anything done on the ground to help pintails? Work through JVs.

We need to tell the pintail group how we feel about the prospectus. We need to take it back to our individual joint ventures.

Bob Trost – not sure this is the way to go. There are concern about the pintail group getting involved in regulatory issues.

Mike Anderson – there was never intention for the pintail group to get involved in harvest regulations for pintails. Also, they never intend to be involved in delivery of habitat programs or to duplicate or circumvent JV functions. The prospectus should be revised if this is not clear.

The NSST should consider this proposal for endorsement over the next two weeks – Seth and Trost will work on it. Get comments to Seth by Feb 12.

Julio Carrera– made a strong statement that there needs to be Mexican representation at all these types of meetings. If not him then others will need to attend.

Next meeting? Approach has been to call meetings of this group only when there is a specific need.

Seth will carry a message to the Plan committee at the North American meeting the idea about have a forum in the future. They meet about twice each year.

Subgroups of the NSST can meet whenever they have the need.

Adjourn